

HB 616 -- URBAN EDUCATION INSTITUTE

SPONSOR: Curtis

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Special Committee on Urban Issues by a vote of 3 to 2.

This bill establishes the "Urban Education Institute," a collaboration between students and faculty at Harris-Stowe State University to address the urban education crisis and to develop a framework to improve quality education in urban areas and public schools. The institute is authorized to receive gifts, bequests, donations, and grant from any source, public or private; however, it is not authorized to accept such items from any committee defined in Chapter 130, RSMo; or any political entity. The institute shall employ, at a minimum, an executive director, two full-time grant writers, and two additional full-time employees. The institute is authorized to consult, collaborate and work in partnership with the education departments of three top-tier educational institutions, three top-tier historically black colleges and universities, any college or university in Missouri, and any other educational organizations. The institute is prohibited from engaging in or using its funds to engage in political lobbying or advocacy.

The provisions of this bill shall sunset six years after the effective date unless reauthorized.

This bill is similar to HCS HB 2327 (2016).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the bill will be another tool to help students in urban areas.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Curtis and AFT Missouri.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill want to thank the bill sponsor for thinking broadly on what is needed in urban settings.

Testifying on the bill was Harris Stowe State University.